

The Impact of Post-war Population Transfers on the Czech-Polish Cross-Border Cooperation

In our project, we are going to study the impact of both forced and voluntary population transfers, which took place after the end of World War II, on the Czech-Polish cross-border cooperation. These transfers caused a significant change in the composition of the population of the Czech-Polish borderland and caused actually a “twofold borderland”: the original German-speaking population was forced to leave territories of both Czechoslovakia and Poland in the western part of the mutual border – which is the entire length of the border between Bohumín/Chalupki and Czech-Polish-German trilateral border. The very eastern part of the border between Bohumín/Chalupki and Czech-Polish-Slovak trilateral border is in a different situation, as the population change was not so major there. We are going to identify the impacts of these changes on the mutual cross-border co-operation on the entire length of the border and categorize them. We will verify the hypothesis expecting the more profound integration in the eastern part of the border.

No similar research on the impact of population transfers after World War II on the Czech-Polish cross-border co-operation has been conducted yet. Therein we see the novelty of our approach. We believe our research might possibly help us to show a lack of interest in issues of expansion (and even reconstruction of pre-war) of cross-border infrastructure in the border regions in Euroregions influenced by post-war population change than it is the case in the Euroregion where this change did not happen. In our research we will apply a mix of research forms and methods: the desk research will be complemented by the works with statistics and then followed by semi-structured interviews with 3 institutional experts on each side of the border – we will base that upon the four dimensions/lenses: structural, institutional, functional and ideational.